1: Gurdon E-4 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

and offered to help them with their cultivation. The Khasis also refused her, saying they were capable of managing their own cultivation, and at the same time told her to go to the country of the Bhois and Syntengs, i.e. the Jaintia Hills. Acting on this advice, she went to the village of Nongphyllud in the Jaintia Hills, where the people again turned a deaf ear to her. She proceeded to Mulagula village in Jaintia, at the foot of the Jaintia Hills, and ascended from thence to Rymbai, where she met a man who conducted her to the house of the Siem, who consented that she and her children should live with him. Ka Taben then apportioned to her children various duties in the house of the Siem as follows:—Ka Rasong was to look after the young unmarried folk, and was to supervise their daily labour and to prosper their trading operations at the markets. Next Ka Rasong was given a place at the foot of the king post, *trai rishot*, and her duty was to befriend young men in battle. Then came *Ka Longkhuinruid*, alias *ka Thab-bulong*, who said, "There are no more rooms in the house for my occupation, so I will go and live in the forest, and him who turns not his coat when I meet him I will make mad." Finally came *U Lamsymphud*, who elected to live with his youngest sister inside the house.

There are special sacrifices offered to these household deities. The leaves of the *sning*, or Khasi oak, are wrapped round the post of the house, and a fowl is sacrificed and other formalities are observed which it would be tedious to describe in detail. The legend of the arrival of Ka Taben with her children in the Synteng country from a distant clime is interesting in that it perhaps indicates the possibility of the migration of these people, i.e. the Syntengs, in ancient times from some distant place to their present abode.

ANCESTOR-WORSHIP.

The Khasis not only revere the memories of deceased ancestors, but they adore them by means of offerings, which are sometimes periodical, and sometimes made when thought neces-

says that the MoBrCh but not the FaSiCh is prohibited (1897: 2), but Gurdon says that the MoBrCh is eligible after the death of MoBr, and that FaSiCh is eligible after the death of Fa (1907: 78). Nowadays both types of marriage occur, whether the linking relative is living or dead. **Residence.** Residence is either duolocal or matrilocal under the roof of the wife's mother until the birth of one or two children. For a man married to a youngest daughter, it then continues to be matrilocal. For men married to other daughters, it becomes uxorilocal; there have also always been cases of virilocal residence, and it is now common to find neolocal residence in Shillong. For non-Christian Jaintias, it is duolocal throughout the marriage. **Domestic unit.** The domestic unit is the elementary family, though for a youngest daughter it may temporarily include also her aged mother, aged father, unmarried siblings, or divorced or widowed brothers. **Inheritance.** Traditionally, after the Khasi mother had helped each of her daughters to build and supply a house when each one married and had children, her only real obligation to help them economically was ended. Everything she possessed, excepting certain personalty that was destroyed in her cremation, was inherited by her youngest daughter. Failing daughters, a woman's property reverted to her next youngest sister's daughter. Today, this pattern is often modified by putting more property into the hands of older daughters and even sons. [Cf. Cantlie 1934; Becker 1924.] **Divorce.** A woman may effect numerous and usually brief separations from her husband by simply closing the door of her house to him, whereupon he returns to the house of his mother or youngest sister. Divorce, however, must be initiated by mutual consent. Divorce is very common, even though women resist it because they do not wish to lose a provider, and men because they do not wish to lose their children. Formerly it was accomplished by a simple ritual in the presence of witnesses, followed by public announcement by a town crier. Now, the witnesses and the public announcement have been dispensed with, and evidence for divorce consists only in the word of the parties concerned.

835
[114]
[178]
591
592
428
[178]
586
586
178

SOCIOPOLITICAL ORGANIZATION. **Political organization.** The basic unit of political organization is the village, which is composed of one or more dominant local descent groups plus several others. Village government is by an assembly of all resident adult males, under the informal chairmanship of a headman elected by them from among their number. The membership of any immigrant household into a village is defined by the participation of the household's males in this assembly. Sustained membership in a village is voluntary. Khasi chiefdoms probably arose out of voluntary associations of villages, which occasionally transferred allegiance from one chief to another.

62
174
619

18: Godwin-Austen G-3 (ca. 1872) 1875 AR7
Khasi AR7

rude stone monuments. At the village of Nougshai, near Shillong, are to be seen some very striking monoliths; and although they do not come up quite to the length of those at Nurtiang (noticed by Dr. Hooker in his "Himalayan Journals"), yet they are very worthy of being mentioned. They stand on the open spur just above the village, and have been worked out of the beds of the Shillong sandstone series, and some of the smaller blocks have been taken from the conglomerate beds, the lowest in the series, and which come in, in the bed of the ravine, to the north of the spur. There are a number of monuments on this site, large and small, arranged both in line and on two sides of a square; the two largest have their central monoliths—height, 24 ft. 3 in.; width, 5 ft. 6 in.; thickness, 8 in.; and height, 23 ft. 2 in.; width, 2 ft. 9 in.; thickness, 1 ft., respectively.

Plate ii., which is taken from a photograph by Mr. William Robert, Assistant Surveyor in the Khasi Hills survey party, gives an excellent idea of the second largest structure, showing the very massive flat-stone, the "Mao Kynthai," in front. This structure consisted of thirteen upright stones, which could not all be brought into the field of the camera; but the six outside stones on the right are shown. Many of the slabs in the adjacent monuments have been overthrown and broken quite recently, perhaps by Sepoys and camp followers from the military station close by. At one time a mountain battery of Eurasian Artillery was quartered there, and I attribute the overthrow of so many of the stones in the neighbourhood to their handiwork, who would look on such amusement as a "great lark." The Sepoy (native of India) is not of a mischievous disposition; the European and half-European (uneducated) is markedly so. Thus the monument with the highest stone is imperfect, and it must, when perfect, have been a very handsome one. This is a sad pity, after the time and labour that must have been expended in its erection.

I did not observe any new slabs anywhere in the immediate neighbourhood. Nougshai must formerly have been a large and powerful village; it stands on a naturally very strong position, and old lines of fortification are to be traced on many sides, especially on the approach from the direction of the Falls of the Umiam. These old lines of defence are on a curious system: a ditch and bank have been carried forward from the main defences from 200 to 300 yards down the ridge of the spurs, thus effectually preventing an enemy working round the hill sides below the villages.

This fortified site points to a state of things in these hills when the relations between the large village communities or

18: Godwin-Austen G-3 (ca. 1872) 1875 AR7
Khasi AR7

174
712
628
[178]

clans were very much as we find them at the present day among the Nagas and Kukis, beyond and bordering our present extreme limits, viz. that of constant feud. They are now the quietest, most peaceful, and contented of all the hill people on the eastern frontier.

172

In my former paper I did not allude to the cairns in these hills, which I am inclined to think are works of greater age than the stone structures. The custom is one that certainly has long since been given up, for I could not obtain any satisfactory account of them. They are only to be seen on the northern side of the Khasi plateau, and Dr. Hooker, in his account of his trips to the Kollong Rock, did not fail to notice them. About Mairaug and towards Nougstoin they are very numerous, and always stand on commanding situations. On the path leading down the grassy spur to the stone monuments previously described, near Nougshai, is a very fine large example of a cairn, about eight feet high. They are usually plain hemispherical mounds of earth; but this one is faced all round at the base with slabs of stone about four feet high; they are frequently not higher than six feet. A distant view is shown in Plate iii.

[103]

Nowhere is there any trace of the earth that forms them having been excavated close by; it must, therefore, have been carried in some short distance, to avoid unsightly hollows near the structure. I should much like to have dug into one of these cairns, but was afraid to hurt the feelings of the people by doing so. They are very probably cineraries of an earlier form to those now made of stone, and this point it might be interesting to clear up.

[114]
[101]

Beyond the Khasi area no cairns are to be found, at least I had never come across any until visiting North Munipur last winter (1872—73), where, at the head of the Imphal river, on the direct road from Samaguting, are four fine cairns, all faced with large boulders. They are old, and the Nagas now living in the village near said they had been made by another clan of Nagas, who long ago had gone further north, and the site of whose village had been lately re-occupied by Kukis.

[114]

Mr. C. B. Clarke, in a paper read lately before your Institute, refers to the different forms of the cinerary in the Khasi Hills; but he has not quite exhausted the subject, or got further than I did, although with regard to the disposal of the ashes of the dead he gives some further interesting particulars.

126
764

As I think that drawings are of very great interest, and better exhibit the many different forms of bone depository or cinerary that have been adopted at different periods by tribes inhabiting localities very far apart, and often quite unconnected affinitively,

21: Ehrenfels E-4,5 (1950) 1953 AR7 Khasi AR7

on a historical past, different from that of the Khasi proper, the former having been ruled by the powerful, but somewhat Hinduised dynasty of the Jaintia Rajas until the Jaintia Wars of the British; the latter by small independent chiefs. Yet Jaintia social organization appears on the whole to preserve the matrilineal social structure clearer and to be less influenced by plains-acculturation, than that of the Khasi, though a few features of Brahmanical religious observances and also some traces of racial admixture are found in the immediate vicinity of Jowei, the former summer residence of the Jaintia Rajas. Stronger no doubt, than this influence, was that exercised by the British and non-Assamese Indians in the provincial capital Shillong since 1866. Methods of agriculture and other aspects of material civilization differ but little in the Jaintia- and Khasi plateau-areas.

The same cannot be said of both: the Wâr-Khasi and Wâr-Jaintias. Linguistically their affiliations are with the Khasi or Jaintias respectively, in the plateau-areas. Economically, however, both Wâr-groups form a separate pan-leaf cultivating unit in the little accessible steep southern slopes of the Khasi- and Jaintia Hill massif. Both Wâr-groups live in the environment of luscious tropical flora and fauna, sharply differentiated from the cool, barren plateau with its perennial winds and the heroic, if solitary beauty of its highland heaths, which forms the background of both the Khasi- and Jaintia plateau-groups.

The age of the Wâr-Khasi and -Jaintias, as one independent economic, — and two half-independent dialectical linguistic entities, is an intricate problem. The two Wâr-groups subsist on pan-leaf cultivation as a money crop, grown in the thick tree-gardens as creepers; not on food-cultivation, as do the plateau-groups, because there is insufficient space on the steep slopes, for vegetable gardens or -fields. The pan-leaf cultivators therefore depend on food, purchased from outside. The slopes seem to have been uninhabited until not long ago. Yet pan-leaf chewing is such an integral part of Khasi life, that until quite recently, and occasionally even now, a distance between two places is not measured by the number of hours used for walking, but by the number of betelnut- and pan-leaf packages, consumed on the way. Also the common benediction among Khasi expresses the wish that so and so may eat pan in the Garden of God. Yet pan-cultivation and the settlements of the Wâr-people as pan-leaf cultivators in the southern slopes seem comparatively young. Pan-cultivation on the plateau is impracticable. It is therefore possible that pan was for a long time only a much valued import article from the plains, bartered against Khasi ore and iron tools, though it is now an export article from the Wâr-country, brought to the markets of the plains, by both Wâr-Khasi and Wâr-Jaintia women and men.

According to a tradition, across which I came among the Nonglamin clan of the Nongmuker village, the ancestors of the present Wâr people were on the plateau at a time when no pan-cultivation was going on in the slopes and none of the present big estates of pan-tree gardens was yet held by their present (Wâr-) owners. A not distant ancestor of a Nonglamin clan-member who about two or three generations ago told the story to U Siang (one of

21: Ehrenfels E-4,5 (1950) 1953 AR7 Khasi AR7

my informants at Padu), in the year 1933, is said to have begun the cultivation of yam (*shuiw*) and millets (*kngi*) in the then uncultivated slopes. He and his people used to be, on this account, ridiculed as monkeys (*shrieh*). The Nonglamin clan took later to pan-leaf-, and arecanut-cultivation and became one of the richest landowners of the Wár-country. Others followed and imitated them. This clan (*kur*) is now residing at Nongtalang, about ten miles east of Padu in the Wár-Jaintia slopes.

This possibility of a comparatively recent origin of the now economically independent Wár-groups among the Khasi speaking peoples is of importance to the question of some different terms in kinship terminology which the following lists will show.

Comments on other features in the relationship terminology, bearing on sociological or historical problems of either among the four Khasi speaking groups under discussion, are being hinted at in the text of the lists itself and further discussed in Part Three of the present paper, following the lists of kinship terms.